

**Bernadett Csurgó – Imre Kovách - Eva Kucerova:**

**The actors of the knowledge base society, Power and knowledge on development projects<sup>1</sup>**

**Introduction**

Knowledge based society are often regarded as key terms at the heart of European rural development and the new and broader development paradigm is taken hold in Europe.

Development projects include power relations however this power can be rather different from direct and open “power on” or “power over” and its main character is that strongly related to using of knowledge. The understanding of project class as the key actor of rural development and rural resource management lies with the mediatory position, where mediatory project actors are differentiated from those who are users of project sources (Kovách – Kucerova 2006). The intellectual property (varying forms of knowledge about sources, management, planning, designing and controlling the development project) provides legitimacy and power for the project class in both re-distributive as well as market mechanisms which are related to development projects. Schuksmith (2000) reminds us that much of social changes are connected to development project and use of knowledge in it and this can lead to segmentation of local people as well deprivation and marginalization of particular social groups inside and outside the project. In this context use of knowledge is linked with source of power.

The aim of this paper is to explore aspects of interlocking use of knowledge and power relation in rural development projects. The power relation can be understood on two ways concerning sustainability and knowledge: power of projectification process on involved and excluded actors and power relations inside the project. The general intention is to demonstrate the importance of considering specific context of knowledge, development project and power within sustainability is constructed. The specificities of rural power relations are occurring in many country reports of CORASON project. The objective of CORASON was to study the

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dynamics of interaction between different types of in projects for rural development. It was used case study approach to rural development projects across the 12 participating countries. It understand rural development as a knowledge-based practice, and as a site of disagreement over who is entitled to produce the relevant knowledge for its interpretation, which knowledge is accessible and understandable for whom, how knowledge sharing and integration is to be negotiated etc. A key issue is to understand the knowledge dynamics operating in projects for rural development as rural areas are increasingly drawn into the new 'knowledge economy' emerging across Europe. (Tovey 2004)

The paper looks at the knowledges used in projects and their social sources, dynamics, and social availability. It discusses the pressure of urban demands on rural development t of local autonomy, and investigates the impact of mediating groups and agencies on the knowledge that is deployed. These issues are elaborated through a study of the interconnection of knowledge and power and the role of the project class in the creating and use of knowledges.

### **Projectification in rural development**

Böröcz and Sharkat note that the European Union is a public authority without apparatus which manages projects to achieves execution of development goals (Böröcz and Sharkat 2005). Ray and Kovách theorize European rural development as system that has two functions: the mode(s) of capitalism and system of co-ordination and (re)distribution that is structured by horizontal, inter-local, and vertical, center-to-locality flows of public funds, power, knowledge, ideas and experiences.( Ray 2001, Kovách 2000) The form of organisation and management of transfers is the project which can be defined, according to EU as well as management literature, as intervention into development process, dedicated budget, fixed time schedule and development goal (Sjöblom 2006). The project in a classical sense is a management tool of matching rural policy and practice which becomes complicated due to the institutional transformation of the civil society and the changing attitudes towards policy (Boonstra 2006)

The mayor finding of relevant studies is that projects are transmitters between international regimes, national administrative levels and project actors as well instruments of legitimising EU policies in member states.(Osti 2000) The legitimisation process involves numerous actors and interests and has a power to create new political and administrative practices. Sjöblom reviews various strategic purposes of projects that are to be constituted through information and knowledge flows and conditions for change in the organisational and

involved actors' orientation context. As he argues symbolic politics, conflict reduction, innovation and as being science of muddling through chaotic complexity are features of projects. On this point we may add that policy intervention through project, the legitimising process, management of development, harmonisation of interests much to be explored in terms of the knowledge use linking power to sustainability. Temmes presents that change from conventional administration to project and knowledge based new public management has created a democratic deficit and steering problems in decision making. (Temmes 2006). We may cite here Anderson or Sulkonen who turn attention to that project base professionalisation of the developmental work, the intensive involvement of knowledge holders, may result fact that those local actors intended to benefit from development project sources may gain little and a managerial stratum comes into being on this way. The "bottom up" can be replaced by "top down" in projectified administration reducing moral resources of the state and the European Union. (Andersson 2006, Sulkonen 2006)

Papers of the „Leadership and local power in European rural development" (Halfacree, K at all 2002) anthology highlight that actors with intellectual and knowledge capital can represent their political, financial and class interests with great potential in projectified European development system or with respect to the subject of this paper in sustainable development projects. In consequence of such a project intervention new power structure has emerged in the enlarged European Union and experts, designers, European and national administrative staffs, holders of intellectual capital and representatives of the civil sector, along with other actors occupy new social and project class positions (Kováč–Kucerova 2006). The project class, owing to the way as development programs are designed and managed and also the character of the related application system and effect of culture economy, uses knowledge and intellectual property as social capital to intermediate between levels and actors of development. Projects have been increasingly becoming intellectual issue for as much specific knowledge is needed to design development programs ideas and images, write applications and achieve rural sustainability (Ray 1988). From viewpoint of power relation the project is a framework in which the knowledge use is "closed in" and related, as *base and means*, to actors' power position. This leads us on to thinking how to understand knowledge in reference to impact of project over actors and power relation inside the rural development project.

### ***Knowledge use and power of the project over actors***

In this part of the paper we present the power of the project over included and excluded actors. We are seeking the answer why this magnetic power of the project is so compelling. What is the imperative mechanism of the magnetism of the project?

Deriving inspiration from Karlheinz Knickel and Henk Renting (2000) we argue that one of the key features of rural development is diversity. The diversity of the actors involved can be revealed by observing their particular activities undertaken and the patterns of motivation that emerge. Project organization and management has a strongly increasing importance in a knowledge-based society, a society that includes knowledge as the dominant productive force. Knowledge based society hinges on the proliferation of knowledge-intensive actors and its groups are basically linked to projects. (Stehr 2001, David-Foray, 2002).

Our aim is to outline the power of the project which is specifically connected to the phenomenon of knowledge usage. The project uses the following channels to attract actors to participate and adapt rural development: the knowledge what involved actors use, different goals of participation, and the participative capabilities of actors and the administrative adjustment of project.

Rural development consists of a wide variety of activities. (Knickel-Renting 2000, van der Ploeg at all. 2000) It fulfils a lot of functions, such as living, production, recreation and nature conservation at the same time. It also connects different interests of wide variety of social groups. Participation in the rural development projects enables different social groups to reach their goals. At the same time the system operates through application, decision, control, evaluation, and monitoring mechanism as a projectified system. The actors involved have to adapt to the former rules of the system, which requires special knowledge.

In a view of case study perspective we draw attention to the main channels of rural development project which have power to involve different types of actors, knowledge usage, interests and goals. For the analysis of the knowledge usage we apply Bruckmeier's typology from CORASON. Input-paper on the theoretical and conceptual framework has defined three forms of knowledge. According to the author of present paper, the analysis of knowledge starts with distinguishing *scientific knowledge* deriving from research (1), *political and managerial knowledge* mainly attributed to politicians, decision-makers, administrators, project officers, managers (2) and *local knowledge* that is the know-how of rural inhabitants, resource user groups and producers (3). (Bruckmeier 2004). We do not intend to classify the

actors of projects, we try to identify the actors empirically and collect examples<sup>2</sup> how they are involved within the project and what kind of knowledge they can/have to use to succeed the project.

Lack of knowledge and resource, obtaining for the goals of rural development, characterises all actors of rural development. The key to the power of the project over actors is that they have partial knowledge and partial resources. In order to reach the goals of the project they need to get external resources and knowledge involved, which puts the actors on the way to cooperate within the framework of the rural development projects. Decisions which give availability to the external resources need to be legitimated by a project form of management and organization. Accordingly, activities of all rural development actors are projectified imperatively. Approaches of involvement by the project reflect the way of social inclusion and exclusion. (Shucksmith 2000, 2004, Reimer 2004 Shortall 2004a, 2004b) Project can be seen as an institution of social inclusion. Social inclusion and exclusion have distributional and relational aspects. (Shucksmith 2000, 2004 Reimer 2004) In the perspective of actor's involvement we use the relational one. Inclusion implies that actors are integrated into the project as an institution and as an arena of social network, while others are excluded.

In the following the main channels of actor's involvement will be represented, how one can be included into the project.

Hungarian case represent very well how different actors are involved in rural development projects. The idea of Social Museum in Hungary was initiated by a recognised expert in his respective field. The Hungarian case shows how cultural elite can reach their goals via rural development projects. The Kócsújfalu Social Museum represented a new service in the area, focusing on the identity of refugees and migrants. That was a new service: a new form of museum and a new approach to research. The actors involved in the project argued that it was also innovative because it represented new forms of co-operation between different sectors. The main idea of the project was to found a Social Museum that would be a site of memory with various functions: archives, museum, recreation area, research and tourism centre. The initiative came from outside including the main goal of the drivers of the project to sustain the memory of deportees. Because of the element of tourism this idea can fit the local development plan. (Csurgó-Nagy-Kalamász 2006)

As we can see actors who want to realize their goals from rural development project, which is a highly regulated and strict system, have to fit their aims to the ideas and goals of rural

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<sup>2</sup> For the examples we use the Hungarian national reports of WP8 on Innovative Rural Development.

development. Besides fitting to the idea of innovatory rural development, the goal of the project needs to have connection to the idea of rural innovation .(Bruckmeier 2000) Many times it means that different actors with different social background reach their goals if they adopt the main idea of the rural development and create a conform plan including their main goal. Indeed it results in more comprehensive project goals connected to the territory and resources of the rurality and it also includes the special goals of different actors. Inclusion into the project depends on acceptable individual goals. The distribution of resources within the project process is based on acceptance of the objectives and the goals of the project. This will require individuals to follow closely those goals, even where it may involve some compromise on their part in order to benefit from the project.

The Hungarian case of Kócsújfalu project (Social Museum), which used many different actors with different knowledge, can represent how the project involves different actors from the cultural elite to the tourist agency. The main actor is the Telepések - Társadalmi Múzeum Alapítvány (T-TMA) coming from Budapest to the case study region to mediate between the actors of the project. The project was then realised through the T - TMA as the holder of expert knowledge on organising meetings, coordinating programmes; local government using knowledge of the region, project coordination and management, finance and general support. Members of the foundation are in touch with ex-deportees, scientists and experts with an important role in the project. T- TMA has connection with Hortobágy National Park which owns infrastructure and provision of social capital and has marketing experience; and the Menora Foundation with knowledge of local history and connections with institutions.(Csurgó - Nagy-Kalamász 2006)

Participation in rural development projects requires knowledge-intensive actors. Processes of rural development projects are characterized by strong knowledge production and reproduction capabilities, a public or semi-public space for learning and exchange and also by the intensive use of other knowledge as well. Case studies prove the importance of all type of knowledge. For the sake of the project each type of them is needed. Several different types of scientific knowledge involved in the projects depend on the issue of the project. The role of scientific knowledge is approached from the relation between society and science. Gibbons argues that a new social contract will therefore involve a dynamic process in which the authority of science will need to be legitimated again and again. The project is an important area of this legitimization, and the science can participate in the production of 'socially robust knowledge'. (Gibbons 1999) We argue that the role of bureaucratic and managerial knowledge is essential to the functioning of almost all the projects, regardless of the scale at

which they operate. Many types of local knowledge were used in the presented case studies, relating to the level of involvement of local actors. At the same time the lack of local knowledge causes problems and failure. (Dargan-Schuksmith 2006)

Consequently each type of knowledge (scientific, managerial, local) are needed to transact a successful project. These three types of knowledge complement each other regarding the process of the project. Because of the importance of all knowledge the different actors have to cooperate as they own only partial knowledge. Special knowledge and skills are a must for drivers of the project because they have to mediate between actors and between different interests. This mediatory position is the base of the cooperation between actors and knowledge. (Kovách-Kucerova 2006, Kovách 2005)

In the Hungarian case (Kócsújfalu – Social Museum project represents important role of participation capacity of local actors. (Csurgó- Nagy-Kalamász 2006) The recent development of tourism in Kócsújfalu, a “sleeping village” can activate local economy. A new touristic service such as the Social Museum can also have impact on the regional tourism business and its approaches. Local people and entrepreneurs will get profit if they have capacity to participate and connect to the project. As a representative of the Tiszafüred local government noted, new consumers and the new emerging demand could transform the touristic services in the region, new demand could generate new supply. The Social Museum could become the base of touristic development in the region. (Csurgó- Nagy-Kalamász 2006)

Accessibility of project participation demands adequate capacity by actors. Cooperation and participation is not only the reason of involvement but also a chance to reach external resources and the base of reaching the goals. Related to the issue of participation Shucksmith argues ‘the more articulate and powerful individuals and groups were better able to engage with programmes and to apply for grants and submit proposals, while others lacking the former’s capacity to act were unable to benefit (...)’ (Schuksmith 2000, p. 210) Actors with capacity are involved within the project imperatively, but without capacity they are crowded out and have no resource attainment.

In the case of Kócsújfalu – Social Museum project local government played a great part in cooperating with T-TMA. It was not only able to provide detailed knowledge of the region and the ways in which it could support such a project, but was also able to provide experience of coordinating such a project involving a large number of actors. (Csurgó- Nagy-Kalamász 2006)

Because of the regulated system of the project, (Kovách-Kucerova 2006, Osti 2000, Ray 2001, Bruckmeier 2000) involved actors need special knowledge to make the project

independent of their social status. They have to study new skills, restructure their existing skills or reach this special knowledge by the help of others. This special knowledge has power to involve actors in the project, it has strong connection with the type of managerial knowledge which consists of the skills required to run projects, including management of human and financial resources, grants, legislation, and the bureaucracy, rules and operating procedures of various government agencies. It is often held by governmental and political actors such as local authorities, development agencies, and local politicians. Project include actors through the formulation of goals and the organisational structure created to reach those goals.

Actors of rural development are characterized by their strong knowledge production and reproduction capacity and intensive use of different knowledge. Involved goals, knowledge, capacity to act and special skills on administrative mechanism are the base of involvement and participation and determine who gains and who loses in the process. Hungarian case study proves the importance all kind of knowledges. However the different forms are in hierarchy, managerial knowledge is essential regarding the process of projects. Usage of scientific knowledge is a must for the plan and idea of projects. The successes of projects need the local knowledge.

Lack of the capacity of cooperation and the suitable knowledge -as a capital inside the project- causes exclusion of actors. (Sucksmith 2000) Inclusion depends on the suitable capacity, the usable forms of knowledge, acceptable goals and adaptation of administrative adjustment. Excluded actors can not reach their goals without project, other arena is not existent. Following the lead of Shucksmith 2000, 2004, Shortall 2004 a,b and Reimer 2004 we argue 'social exclusion and inclusion are about having access to the assets and resources critical to well-being. People and group gain access to these assets and resources in many ways,' (Reimer 2004 p. 77) one of this ways is the project. Therefore the project has strong power over internal actors and also over excluded ones. In the followings the power relation and knowledge usage of internal actors inside the project will be presented.

### **The knowledge base of power inside the rural development project**

It was clear outset of the study that looking at power relation inside rural development projects there are two, closely tied, starting points of the analysis – actors themselves with social and professional background, ambitions, knowledge and development goals and their

power position within projects (way as the knowledge is used). Sjöblom stress that actors in project networks join interest concerning financial sources and legal resources of the political system, however, Foucault (Foucault 1978, Cheshire 2006) puts emphasis on power relation that are modified by the grip of precise strategy leading towards strengthening power of local actors or aiming to the potential resistance. As Sjöblom argues regional development projects involve actors with different social, economic potential, interest and power position to change social and economic reality and reach development goal (Sjöblom 2006).

There is no doubt that with regards to link between actors' power and their knowledge, we have to take into consideration that "active members" (Latour 1987) shape claims in different projects. In other words, not only the role of existing knowledge and actors as drivers of the knowledge need to be studied because their evident impact on projects, but actors' potential to activate and practically use their knowledge or manipulate with other knowledge. There is no any project, which would be based on activity of one (even individual) actor; no any project plan or/and realisation is one-man show. Rural development projects imply and work trough multilevel, actors' power relations, when actors with varying social capital and knowledge contribute to network with impact on project process. By focusing the transmission of knowledge within projects, we identified several models according the origin of knowledge – local/rural and non-local, type of knowledge, influence and control of knowledge over project. The core question is what (knowledge) sources of their power position are and how network is built up.

The evidences from several cases *reveal top-down transfer of knowledge* to the locality. The knowledge is non-local and mostly it can be combination of expert and managerial knowledge. The substantial is hierarchical transmitting of knowledge from non-local key actors who have to harmonize interest with local actors involved into project through the over dominating managerial and expert knowledge what is the base of their power. In the terms of Goffman's social action analysis (Goffman 1999) project realized in the locality is rather "scene" for the incoming actors who utilize local actors capacity and locality itself for their own purposes, even if projects follow realization of rural development principles.

Second *transition knowledge* we have found in several projects also which have been initiated by the local actor/s to realize their visions through projects. The activities could be based on their prospectus or/and realization of project to contribute regional/rural development in locality. The newly established network is a platform to realize the project and maintain it for long times. The process starts when key local actor/s, who can be taken as project idea

founder, set up project capacity in terms of needed knowledge and consequently activate relevant accessible actors to flow up knowledge into the project. This is led by the rational decision of local actor to attract knowledge to complete conditions for sustainable project. Among case studies, which have been used as examples, projects are based on the initiative of entrepreneurs and their aims.

The practice of *mobilizing of knowledge* is based on the previously established network of actors. The mobilizing of knowledge means that one or more actors identify and exploit already existed actors who are more or less networked. The actor network is used and can be partially “renewed” for the project purpose.

The category of *value driven knowledge* we involved all type of knowledge transmitting into projects, which is not typical of any “centripetal power” which would push knowledge in the core of projects. The knowledge in these cases are flowing into the project, because importance of projects itself for actors who convey their knowledge to contribute the project realization. The projects that deal with ecological problems are representative.

A Hungarian and a Czech case represent very well how local actors realize their vision through the project and how they can use their knowledge. The Czech and Hungarian case studies reveal stories of women built their career on artisan pottery making production. Both of them aimed to establish their business on pottery making production which reflect the successful combination of excellent and tacit knowledge of pottery tradition, ability to re-invent good marketing skills. They have disposal of basic managerial skills and developed marketing plan to combine the knowledge of traditional local pottery art, and the re-invention of tradition, managerial knowledge and some practice in tourist business. Their strategy for further development and sustain entrepreneurship is different, however, same basis to mobilize network and actors who are accessible in region and can strengthen their position on the market. Czech pottery maker decided to enlarge her activities in locality and provide services for tourist, e.g. accommodation, courses focused on the art and decoration in practice and for this she had to mobilize many actors to result of interconnection of needed knowledge for the benefit of project – economist and manager to control cash flow to economically maintain project for future, architect and designer to reconstruct workroom and farm house to be fit for project purposes, local media to publicize farm as meeting place for tourists, entrepreneurs

and relevant foundations to complete tourist program/package. (Kučerová – Ševčíková 2006). While Czech pottery maker focuses on mobilizing local actors who operate with local and tacit knowledge to renew and demonstrate local traditions as tourist attraction and mobilize actors who use their managerial and expert knowledge to strengthen her project of local rural tourist destination, Hungarian woman using same kind of knowledge, but for another orientation of her activities – more linked to the teach young students, combining education with local knowledge and cooperation with talented individual potters in the area. With the regards to successful of project, we can assume Czech approach could be more successful than Hungarian (Kučerová – Ševčíková 2006).

The actor who associates other actors and activates network will apparently be non-local. The evidence of mobilizing network is in the Czech case study deals with bio-beef production. The young man, economist initiated project when he has bought farm before bankruptcy and started orientate farm production for bio production of beef. The project is successful, because he joins several companies to gain control of chain from production to distribution at market. The companies, which are involved into common business, are stabile and profitable in comparison to previous times (Zagata – Kučerová 2006)

However, we stressed complexity of project process as actors cooperate in one project parallel to realise their political, economical, civil or any other ambitions, we have found projects when one actor initiates project and dominates over project realisation and can control it.

We have found several basic types using knowledge in consequences of actors who are participating on the projects.

The local conditions and character of project presupposed what type of actors will part important role in projectification and what kind of knowledge will be used in realisation of projects.

When the network of actors is already existed in the time of realisation of project, there can be strongly strengthening power of actors in cooperation and autonomous actors, usually non-local and using universal managerial, expert or scientific knowledge. One typical is case of state as key actor to have brings elbowroom for actor operating of knowledge when using political power to institutionalised legislative frames. The land management is one domain to entitle state public administration intervention in the terms of strengthening position of some actors to intervene into projects.

On the other side there are rather different type of realisation projects when network actor I or/and need to be built for the project realisation. This is typical more in using value driven knowledge and knowledge base of bottom up capacity building when rather local actors

operate with specific knowledge can dominate in project realisation or they can be at least rivals to non-local actors and their knowledge.

### **Concluding remarks**

We attempted to set out some of reference points that relevant taking forward understanding the forms of knowledges and knowledge use that are related to different power positions in actor network. As we see from case study examples above the managerial, expert knowledge has risen however use of all kind of knowledges is necessary to reach development goals. Nowadays, exclusion of local, lay knowledge from project leads to exclusion of local people, intensifies intervention of non-local institutional and individual actors and impugns local autonomy.

At the same time the key to the power of the project over actors including locals and non-locals is that they have partial knowledge and partial resources, they need integrated external and internal resources and different forms of knowledges to obtain their goals which puts actors on the way to cooperate within the framework of the rural development projects. The force of cooperation is a base of new rural –non rural relations, networks and policy structure. We intended to focus this study intensively on question of holders of managerial knowledge, the project class and whether managerial, expert knowledge monopolised by project class plays a role in determining sustainable development project and inside power relations. It was postulated on the basis of earlier studies that emergence of project class associated with key position of managerial, expert knowledge. A major theme running through this paper is knowledge base of power position and from this approach we can add that concept of project class needs to be expanded. The highlighted features of cognitive strata are the intellectual property and mediating position in the projects. It was clear from the research that fluidity and flexibility as social character of project class may be interpreted on a new way. The local and non-local groups, owners of all kind of knowledges and social capitals that enable them to have control over resources of sustainable development, time by time are being involved in project class position regardless their profession. In that sense project class not only a new group in the society but we may interpret it as a social position in which and from out the access and secession are continuous and altering by projects. We also underline that project class use a novel form of knowledge which is basically different from classical intellectual as well form lucid expert knowledge. In lack of evidences and studies this comment suggests the need for further research on newly arising knowledge of project class.

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